

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA.

WITH EARLY REMINISCENCES OF THE PLACE.

A Lecture Before the Congregation,

March 7th, 1860.

BY

J. L. WILLIAMS.

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It has not been the aim of this sketch to give a connected history of Fort Wayne. The incidental allusions to events which connect it with the earliest explorations, and with the dawnings of civilization in the North West, cannot fail however, to suggest the idea that Fort Wayne should find in some one a competent historian. Few points in all the West furnish more interesting material.

LECTURE.

The formation of the Presbyterian Historical Society, has already induced many valuable contributions to the early religious history of the country. Its object is commended by the highest considerations. If the commencement and growth of our material prosperity are worthy of an enduring record, much more the early struggles and labors for the establishment of a *religious* and *moral* influence, by which alone this prosperity can be sanctified and blessed. The christian citizen will ever turn to the church of his choice as an institution claiming affectionate regard, and its history, even back to the feeble beginning, will ever possess the highest interest.

The place in which Providence has cast our lot, in every respect has claims upon the historian. Fort Wayne is historic ground. It has reminiscences extending back an hundred and fifty years. Dillon, the historian of Indiana, from his researches, is of opinion that it was often visited by the French, before the year 1700, and thinks a trading post was established here prior to 1719,* Vaudreuil, Gov. of Louisiana, writing in 1751, names Fort Miami at this point. It was a small Stockade Fort built by the French and situated near the St. Mary, probably in the vicinity of the canal aqueduct. The dim outlines of this Fort were traced by Wayne in 1794, and by Col. John Johnston in 1800.

The junction of these rivers, the St. Mary and the St. Joseph, may even claim a page in the annals of that momentous contest between French and English civilization—between Romanism and Protestantism—which was

* If Judge Law be correct in fixing 1710 for the settlement at Vincennes, we can scarcely err in claiming at least as early a date for the trading post here. The progress of the traders and missionaries was from Canada. A report of La Salle, written probably in 1682, mentions the route by the Maumee and Wabash, as the most direct to the Mississippi. It is improbable that the French would pass this thronged centre of the Miamies, (sometimes called Twightwees in their early history,) at the carrying place between these rivers, without establishing here one of that cordon of military posts designed to connect their Canadian and Mississippi settlements.

waged with alternating success, and with short intervals of repose, for more than a hundred years, terminating soon after the fall of Quebec, in the establishment of Anglo-Saxon supremacy by the treaty of 1763. The massacre of the little English garrison three-fourths of a mile north from the site of this Church, on the 27th of May, 1763, during Pontiac's war, was accomplished through the treacherous influence of French traders over the Indians. This was among the last exertions of French power on this continent, east of the Mississippi. It was a subsiding wave on the outer circle of the long agitated waters. This Fort stood on the east bank of the St. Joseph, near its mouth. Its capture was accomplished through the deceit of an Indian girl, the instrument of those older in dissimulation. Under pretence of the dangerous sickness of an Indian woman, the English commandant was prevailed upon by this girl, in whom he had confidence, to venture out of the Fort for her relief. On approaching the designated wigwam, he was pierced by two rifle balls, shot from behind its cover, and fell dead upon the grass. Col. Johnston says, "I often saw the aged squaw who slew the commander," referring to the woman, who in her youth was made the agent in treacherously beguiling him to his death.

The aim of this sketch does not permit us to dwell upon the great contest closed in 1763. Yet from this advanced stand-point, looking backward an hundred years, we cannot fail to perceive that in its result were involved the institutions, civil and religious, of all this immense region from the Lakes to the Gulf, and from the Allegheny range to the Rocky Mountains. Two variant civilizations had been confronted for two generations in conflict for the possession of a continent. What, if at the siege of Quebec, the key to the St. Lawrence and the Lake region, the arms of Catholic France, instead of Protestant England, had prevailed? What, if over all this Western country, soon to shape the nation's destiny, Romanism had been ever since striking its roots deep into this virgin soil? The bare suggestion is enough to awaken reflection in any mind that has obser-

ved the limited progress of that enervating system, in contrast with our vigorous Protestantism, in the front column of whose advancing civilization are ever found the school-master, a free press, * and an open bible. It has been estimated that from eighty to one hundred millions of English bibles are in print throughout the world. Certainly the number is five, probably ten fold more than in all other languages spoken by man. So with the printing press, another great power of our times. Of the millions of sheets dropping daily from the press in all lands, how over-shadowing the proportion in our tongue. In no other language, to any extent, is the press free. No where else has Liberty, civil, religious, or personal, more than a stinted growth. She seems to have chosen our own mother tongue in which to chronicle her persistive earnest struggles, and her sublime triumphs. It has been aptly styled "the Missionary language:" it is also the language of progress and of free institutions. From these facts, with the amazing increase and diffusion of the Anglo-Saxon race, the conjecture has been plausibly maintained that the christian religion, christian civilization, and christian literature, are to spread over the earth mainly through the English language, —British commerce preparing the way in one direction, as in India, and American enterprise and progress on this continent and the islands about us. How signally and sadly would North America have failed in preparation for her part of this august mission, had the French language and civilization, and not the English, been dominant in this Western domain for the past hundred years!

We know that by translation chiefly, can the Bible be made known to existing generations of the heathen. Yet in an extended view, reaching far into the future, there is ground for large expectation and cheering hope in the gradual diffusion among the nations of the English language, carrying with it to the understanding of men, not only the Bible, but the great ideas and the genius of christianity and

* Under French rule in Canada, from the founding of Quebec in 1608, to the treaty of cession in 1763, no village school was ever established, nor a single printing press set up.—*Bancroft*.

civilization, so interwoven with the entire fabric of English literature. Every missionary station with its school; every establishment for legitimate American or British commerce, is an entering wedge for the language and for the race. It is the infusing of a vivifying element whose spreading influence must tend to quicken the inert mass.* In view of this co-operative mission among the nations of lower culture, may we not reasonably hope, that these English speaking nations, at least as against each other, have fought out their last war; and that in their plans of progress and territorial acquisition, peaceably or by conquest, if there must be conquest, their advances hereafter will run in concurrent, not in conflicting lines.

Though Wolfe and Montcalm may not have understood it—as men seldom understand the part they act in the comprehensive plans of Providence—yet the long pending conflict which they decided on the heights of Abraham, was a war of religion as well as of language and race. We can scarcely, however, resist the conceit, that perceptions of unwonted clearness were given to these brave commanders, as their noble spirits passed together from the battlefield. Wolfe, when aroused from the death stupor by the thrilling words, "The French give way everywhere," though a few days before, with enfeebled constitution contemplating an early natural death with dismay, recovered strength to say, "Now God be praised, I die happy." Was some bright vision of the future achievements and glory of the Saxon race in the new world, vouchsafed just as life ebbed away? And Montcalm, on being told by the surgeon that he could live but a few hours, replied, "So much the better; I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec." Was a glimpse into the far future opened up, just at the close of his prolonged, heroic struggle for his beloved France, presenting to his dying vision, with oppressive

* "The translation of the Bible into the tongues of nations of low moral training, has been found a matter of exceeding difficulty." * * * * *
 "English is emphatically the language of commerce, of civilization, of social and religious freedom, of progressive intelligence, of active catholic philanthropy; and therefore, beyond any tongue ever used by man, it is of right the cosmopolite speech."—*Marsh's Lectures on the English Language.*

See also Appendix Note A.

vividness, the waning of the Gallic race on this continent? However this may be, the fact to us is palpable, that mighty influences were set to work by the decision of that old French and English war.* In far-reaching results, the earth has witnessed no contest comparable to it, in all its annals, even back to the time when the herdmen of Abram and of Lot, in petty conflict, strove together for the pasturage of Canaan.

Four nations, at different periods have held dominion here. For near half a century prior to the conquest of Canada, the tri-colored flag waved at the meeting of the St. Joseph and St. Mary. The French adapted their manners and character to forest life. Schoolcraft says, the Indians of the North West often referred to "the days of French supremacy as a kind of golden era, when all things in their affairs were better than they now are." Then came the English in December 1760,† and the British flag was run up in its stead. Their manners were reserved and haughty, far less adapted than the genial, pliant and vivacious French to win the confidence of the Indians. In no particular is there greater dissimilarity in the two Nations. The French, like the Spaniards, readily meet a lower civilization upon an intermediate platform, as in Canada and Mexico. The genuine Anglo-Saxon takes no step downward. English society in Calcutta is as select and high-toned as in London. To elevate, near to its own level, or else to destroy by gradual encroachment and pressure, seems to be the mission of the race among the sluggish and decaying nations. Whether or not the Indian sagacity was adequate to a full perception of these diverse tendencies, certain it is that the Miamies of that day were haters of the English. In less

* Hon. Samuel F. Vinton, in arguing the question of boundary between Virginia and Ohio, maintained conclusively, that according to the law of nations, the claim of France to the Valleys of the St. Lawrence and Mississippi, founded on discovery and occupation, was *perfect*, and that of England, based on her colonial possessions along the Atlantic slope, not even a *respectable pretense*. The sword seems therefore to have been the only arbiter which could have given this vast country to English civilization.

† Detroit was surrendered to the English forces under Major Rogers on the 29th Nov. 1760. An Officer was then sent Southward to take possession of Fort Miami and Ouatienon.—*Parkman*.

than three years the British flag was lowered, and its proud defiant folds trailed in British blood.* The conspiracy of Pontiac—greatest of the Red race, in genius, force of character, and statesman-like combination—had done its work. Nine of the twelve English Forts in the North West, scattered from Presque-Isle (now Erie) to Green Bay, and from Mackinaw to Ouatatonon (near Lafayette) were captured, with terrible carnage, in the space of a few weeks. Only Detroit, Fort Pitt, and Green Bay, successfully resisted the simultaneous attack. Thence forward for thirty-one years, as in the preceding century, the barbarian power and glory of the Miamies † at this point was unchecked, until the advent of Wayne. To the Indians, as to us, it was a chosen central home and place of thronged concourse. Here the Tribes and Bands gathered in council for War or for Peace.‡ History attests their attachment to it. Their appeal at the Greenville treaty in 1795, after their country had been conquered, for permission still to occupy this spot, was touching. Little Turtle spoke of this carrying place, as “that glorious gate which your younger brothers had the happiness to own, and through which all the good words of our chiefs had to pass from the North to the South, and from the East to the West.” But the earth is for cultivation, not, permanently for the chase. For great and beneficent providential ends—the greatest good to the greatest number—civilization and religion were to be introduced, and the Red man has passed away. Under American rule has risen this beautiful city of some twelve thousand inhabitants, with Railroads and Telegraphs, Churches and Free Schools.

A modern writer says; “Indolence, prodigality, and

* It was about the period of these stirring changes, that the late Miami Chief Richardville was born under “the Big Apple tree,” standing some sixty rods from the supposed site of this old British Fort. This tree yet stands, connecting the memories of the past century with the present. Its circumference is eleven feet. We need not question its identity. There are specimens of the hardier varieties in this country now bearing fruit at the age of 150 to 200 years. (See Am. Cyclopaedia.)

† See appendix note B.

‡ This place was called Ke-ki-ong-gay in the Miami dialect: Ke-ki-ouge in the Pottawattamie.

want of forethought, are sufficient causes why men and nations should forfeit their right in the soil as the patrimony from God." Without entering upon these deep mysteries, it is nevertheless plain that the occupation of this part of the continent by a people who would develop its long dormant resources, was, just at that period, demanded by the economical, social and moral necessities of the world. Much as we may pity the poor Indian; little as we should palliate the severity, often needless, with which he has been driven back; yet we may not question the All-wise disposings which gave this fertile land to a race that is making it the granary of the world, and will fit it by the close of this century, for the abode of an hundred millions of people, exhibiting the highest type of christian civilization.

The expedition of La Balm * against Detroit in August or September, 1780, also connects Fort Wayne, by memorials written in blood, with the war of the Revolution. This daring forest chieftain, with earnest sympathy for the American cause, and, we must think, with more zeal than knowledge, collected at Kaskaskia and Vincennes, about an hundred men, and set out for the capture of Detroit, then in possession of the British. The signal achievement of Col. George Rogers Clark, a few months before, in taking Vincennes with one hundred and seventy men, no doubt incited to this daring adventure. Seizing the goods of British traders at Fort Wayne, on his march, the Miamies, instigated by the English, attacked his encampment on the *River Aboite* in this vicinity. In this battle La Balm's little army, with few exceptions, was entirely cut off.

The sagacious mind of Washington, at an early period, fixed upon the junction of these rivers, as of commanding importance for a strong military post, and the main purpose of the campaign of 1791, was its occupation as a centre of military operations for the North West. The instructions to General St. Clair were prepared under his special direction. His plans contemplated a garrison here of one thousand to twelve hundred men, including the communications.

* Dillon's History. Also Law's History of Vincennes.

The defeat of St. Clair's army, when within a day's march of this place—a defeat more disastrous than that of Braddock—marred all his well matured plans for the defense of the North West. The news of this terrible reverse furnished the occasion on which Washington, for once in his life, is said to have been overcome by an ungovernable burst of passion. As the scene is described by Irving, his wrath was tremendous. His private secretary who alone was present, was awed into breathless silence by the appalling tones in which the torrent of invective was poured forth. "It's all over!" said he, "St. Clair's defeated! routed." His equanimity was soon restored, and Washington was himself again. But the important national objects hinging upon this campaign, and on the military occupation of this point, as they lay in Washington's mind, are thus revealed. We need not marvel that his great soul was stirred to its inmost depth. A favorite military plan had disgracefully failed for the second time. Out of an army of fifteen hundred, nine hundred had been cut off. Kentucky and Western Pennsylvania were in mourning for the slain. A thousand miles of defenceless frontier were thrown open to the merciless savages, rendered more savage and merciless, by this second repulse of the American army, in its attempts to occupy this their favorite place of rendezvous, the Federal city of the tribes forming the Miami confederacy. This success following the defeat of Harmar's army the year before, whose battle-field was within rifle shot of this church building, had emboldened the Indians to believe that a final overthrow of the "pale-faces" was quite within their power. Great was the consternation on the frontier. The Presbytery of Red Stone, then the only Presbytery west of the mountains, in view of these calamities past and impending, appointed a day of fasting and prayer, throughout their then extended bounds.

Harmar's principal engagement was on the tongue of land between the St. Joseph and Maumee rivers, the site of the main Indian village. The carnage was especially terrific in the conflict that took place in the bed of the St.

Joseph river near its mouth, and also in the retreat of the Americans across the Maumee, half a mile below the junction, still known as Harmar's Ford. Tradition relates that the river being low, was deeply crimsoned in its current with human blood. The extreme point of land just below the mouth of the St. Joseph, now so attractive in rural peaceful beauty, is said to have been the accustomed place for burning prisoners.* In 1790, before Harmar's campaign, Mr. Gamelin was sent by Gov. St. Clair to the Indians here as a peace commissioner. Three days after he left this point, about the first of May, as if in savage derision of the overtures of the United States Government, an American was brought here and burned.†

The campaign of 1794—the third under Washington's administration directed to this central point of Indian strength — was successful. After defeating the Indians at the Rapids of the Maumee, Gen. Wayne selected here a commanding site, and in October of that year, Fort Wayne was completed and placed under the command of Major Hamtramck. Thence forward peace reigned on this frontier, until the war with England. From the erection of Fort Wayne, sixty-six years ago, this has been a centre of American civilization and influence.

A venerable christian gentleman, Col. John Johnston‡ of Ohio, now in his eighty-fifth year, whose active and useful life is connected with three generations, thus writes in Nov. 1859, to a member of this Church.

“I was appointed in the Indian Department in 1800, and stationed at Fort Wayne. My habitual station was there for twelve or thirteen years. There was not a protestant clergyman of any denomination that performed divine service at that post during the time stated. * * * The only officer of the army, within my knowledge, who publicly professed Christianity, was Col. Vose, who commanded at Fort Wayne about the year 1816 or 17. This

* These statements were made to some of our older citizens by Chief Richardville, Mr. Peltier and others. See appendix note C.

† Dillon's History. ‡ Member of the Episcopal Church.

noble christian soldier was in the constant practice of assembling his men on the Sabbath day to read the scriptures and converse with them relative to their duties and the salvation of their souls—a rare instance of christian fidelity and the power of divine grace. I never knew to what denomination he belonged. The conduct of such a man and under such circumstances, can only be appreciated by persons familiar with the allurements and temptations of military life. * * * The nearest white settlement was Hamilton county, Ohio, and the Post office, Cincinnati, two hundred miles distant from this Post. Fifty-eight years ago it took me twenty-seven days on horseback, from Fort Wayne to Washington City, and now the distance can be traveled by rail in two days.”

The desire naturally arises here to learn further of Col. Vose, the commencement of whose public history resembles so much in strength of religious purpose that of Havelock in India, or of Capt. Vicars, who fell so bravely before Sebastopol, only two days after leading the devotions of a public religious meeting in the English camp. As yet, we have only learned, through the Departments at Washington, that he died in the army at New Orleans, in 1845, and that he ever maintained the character of “a very correct and honorable man, an excellent officer, without fear and without reproach.”*

When Gen. Harrison, in September, 1812, marched to the relief of the garrison here, then besieged by the Indians, the expedition was accompanied by Rev. Matthew G. Wallace, an honored Presbyterian minister, recently deceased at Terre Haute, as Chaplain to the army. If, as may be presumed, he preached to the soldiers while here, his was the first proclamation of the gospel in Protestant form, on this ground.

Though not strictly within the range of this history, yet in any record of early religious effort at Fort Wayne, the work of Rev. Isaac McCoy, of the Baptist Church, must

*A letter has since been received from Rev. Dr. Kingsbury, Missionary among the Choctaw Indians, referring to the after life of Col. Vose. See appendix, Note D.

not be omitted. From May, 1820, to December, 1822, he resided here preaching the gospel, and maintaining a Mission School, chiefly for the benefit of the Indians. In August, 1822, a Baptist Church was organized at Fort Wayne, consisting of the mission family, two Indian women and one black man. Mr. McCoy's faithful and intelligent missionary labors here and elsewhere in the Indian territory, have passed into the published history of the country.

But the distinction of having first preached to the actual settlers of Fort Wayne, according to the distinctive faith and usages of the Presbyterian Church, and under ecclesiastical appointment, is due to the Rev. John Ross, a native of Ireland, now familiarly and reverently known throughout the two Synods of Indiana as "Father Ross." This venerable servant of God yet lives in Howard county, Indiana, at the age of seventy-seven years, awaiting in hope and patience the close of a long and self-denying ministerial life, chiefly spent among the outposts of civilization.

In December, 1822, Mr. Ross, then pastor of a church in the New Jersey settlement, on the west side of the Big Miami, opposite the town of Franklin, visited this Post, under appointment of the General Assembly to labor for three months as a Missionary among the destitutions of this frontier region. The settlement here comprised about one hundred and fifty or two hundred souls, including French and half-breed families, mainly engaged in the Indian trade. The nearest white settlement was at Shane's Prairie, forty miles distant, and except as the trace was dotted with an occasional settler, a day's journey apart, all north-west of Piqua, Ohio, was a wilderness. The Missionary took passage in a light two-horse wagon with Matthew Griggs, afterwards with his family members of the Fort Wayne church, then of Lebanon, Ohio, and visiting Fort Wayne on a trading expedition, with hats and dried fruit. This incident, though in itself trivial, aptly exemplifies the fact exhibited on a larger scale, in all past

history, down to the late commercial treaties between the great Christian powers and China — that commerce, under the orderings of Providence, is made the means of spreading the gospel over the earth. The ship of commerce carries the Missionary to India or China, and the structure of Anglo-Saxon civilization there maintained for commercial ends, sustains him amid Heathenism. Material interests and governmental regulations, though not so designed, thus become the scaffolding on which ministers of the gospel stand while building the spiritual temple.

Father Ross, in a letter dated November 26th, 1859, describes the peril and exposure of this first missionary journey; how their first night's encampment in the woods, a few miles north of Dayton, was made memorable by the howling of wolves on every side; how the snow-storm afterwards met them in the wilderness with intense cold, which froze fast in the mud the wheels of their wagon; how failing to strike fire from the flint, the woodsman's last hope, they were compelled to leave their conveyance under guard of a faithful dog; how, by walking and leading their horses, the cold being too severe to ride, they reached Fort Wayne at a late hour on a wintry night; and with that kindness he was received by one who afterwards became and still continues a ruling Elder* in this church—a kindness, the remembrance of which, the lapse of thirty-eight years seems not to have even dimmed in the old Missionary's grateful heart. Verily he does not "lose his reward," who but gives to "one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple." Were there no other reward than a simple unaffected expression like this of enduring gratitude, from one of Christ's aged ministers, now ready to depart, it is enough.

Father Ross continues: "The next day being the Sabbath, I preached in the Fort morning and afternoon, because there was no other convenient place to preach in.

* * * I visited the place five times from 1822 to 1826. I was once sent out to Fort Wayne by the Synod

*Samuel Hanna.

of Ohio. In all my visitations I preached in St. Marys, Shane's Prairie, and Willshire, and scattered religious tracts and bibles. There was no place that appeared to me so unpromising as Fort Wayne. * * * There was no Sabbath kept but on the part of a few."

The business records of the Home Missionary Society, furnish the following memorandum of the correspondence of that period :

"Allen Hamilton, Post Master at Fort Wayne, December 10th, 1828, wrote, saying there had been no minister there since the town was laid off. He urged their claims by saying that the canal is laid off through the place ; that there are in the town and immediate vicinity, five hundred inhabitants and no preaching within eighty miles," &c., &c.

In response to this appeal, Rev. Charles E. Furman was appointed a Missionary for Fort Wayne. On the 20th of February, 1830, he wrote to the Mission Rooms in New York, from this place, as follows :

"I arrived here on the 13th of November. From this place, one hundred miles in every direction, it is a perfect wilderness. * * * This county only contains seven or eight hundred inhabitants, between three or four hundred of whom live in town. I never knew for the same number of inhabitants in any place, so many attendants upon the preaching of the gospel. Without a library, except a very small selection of tracts, I have a small, though interesting Sabbath School. * * * There are about seven or eight who have been professors of religion in our Church before, and I think a church might now be formed of at least a dozen members. * * * One lady in the place has been, I trust, born into the Kingdom. The people are hospitable, and have more intelligence and liberality of feeling, than any similar town I have found in the country.

* * * This has been a place of Indian trade, and formerly a garrison of soldiers was stationed here. The people who came here were enterprising, and have done well in business. * * * Indians knowing no Sabbath,

the dealers accommodated them upon every day, and they would choose to trade upon the Sabbath; because, as they said, the whites had nothing else to do; and only a few years since, the Sabbath was the most noisy day of the seven."

After preaching some six or eight months, Mr. Furman passed on to other fields.

In June, 1831, Rev. James Chute, of the Presbytery of Columbus, visited Fort Wayne, and on the first of July following, at the request of the few Presbyterians then residing here, organized the 1st. Presbyterian Church of Fort Wayne, consisting of eleven members. On the 4th of October, 1831, the church was received under care of Miami Presbytery, whose place of meeting was some one hundred and twenty miles distant.

Of the first members of this Church, two were half-Indians, who had before, in 1820, joined the Baptist church under the labors of Rev. Mr. McCoy, missionary to the Indians at this post. They were nieces of "Little Turtle," the celebrated war-chief of the Miamies, the force of whose fierce courage, as leader of the savage hosts, our countrymen had felt on this spot in the bloody conflict with Harmar's army, in 1790, and again in the defeat of St. Clair, on the upper Wabash, in 1791. They were daughters of Captain Wells, who, at the age of twelve years, had been taken prisoner in Kentucky and adopted by the Miami tribe.

Of Little Turtle, Col. Johnston thus writes: "Mesh-ekunnoghquoh, or the Little Turtle, was of mixed blood, half Mohican, half Miami. * * * I knew him intimately—the gentleman of his race. He died at Fort Wayne, and was buried, as he deserved, by the commanding officer, with all the honors of war due to his high character and rank." With great propriety, the spot which he so bravely defended against Harmar, in 1790, was selected as his burial place.

Capt. Wells fought by the side of his Chief in the

memorable battle with St. Clair's army. Afterwards in the times of calm reflection, with dim memories still of his childhood home, of brothers and playmates, he seems to have been harrowed with the thought that amongst the slain by his own hand, may have been his kindred. The approach of Wayne's army in 1794, stirred anew conflicting emotions, based upon indistinct recollections of early ties of country and kindred on the one hand, and existing attachments of wife and children on the other. He resolved to make his history known. With true Indian characteristics, the secret purpose of leaving his adopted nation, was, according to reliable tradition, made known in this manner. Taking with him the war-chief, Little Turtle, to a favorite spot on the banks of the Maumee, Wells said: "I now leave your nation for my own people. We have long been friends. We are friends yet, until the sun reaches a certain height, (which he indicated.) From that time we are enemies. Then if you wish to kill me you may. If I want to kill you I may." At the appointed hour, crossing the river, Capt. Wells disappeared in the forest, taking an eastern direction to strike the trail of Wayne's army. Obtaining an interview with Gen. Wayne, he became ever afterward the faithful friend of the Americans, * though living chiefly with the Miamies until killed in the Chicago massacre in 1812, having gone to that besieged post on a hazardous mission for the relief of his friends.† The historian relates that his heart was cut in pieces and divided among the tribes. The daughters of Capt. Wells, Mrs. Turner, and Mrs. Hackley, were educated in Kentucky, and are yet kindly remembered by some in this church and community, as ladies of refinement and intelligent piety. The house of one of them was the appointed place of weekly prayer for this church, where blessings were sought upon the little vine planted in the wilderness. They now rest

* At one time Wells was Indian Agent at Fort Wayne, by appointment of the Government.

† The wife of the Commandant at Chicago, is understood to have been Wells' niece.

beside their kinsman, the war-chief, in the old orchard near the junction of the rivers.

Of the little flock of eleven, whose names were enrolled at the beginning, all, pastor and people, have passed from the church below, save two ladies, and one of the two Elders* then ordained, who, having passed man's allotted time on earth of three score years and ten, is yet spared to recount to us, before he goes hence, something of all the way in which the flock was led, and of the goodness and mercy bestowed upon this church in the times of its feeble beginning. In all this part of the North-West, from Piqua even to the Selkirk settlement in the British possessions, this, at its organization, was probably the only church of the Presbyterian type.†

The want of a place of worship, affording reasonable comfort, was here a chief hindrance of church progress for the first six years. Six or eight different rooms were occupied within this period. The religious services connected with the organization were held in the open air under a rude shelter of boards, near the junction of Columbia and Harrison streets, on ground now occupied by the canal basin. For a time, the little brick school-room, about twenty by twenty-five feet, then standing some two hundred feet south west of the present county jail, in a cluster of sumach shrubbery, was the place of worship. Then the Masonic Hall, on the site of Hill & Orbison's warehouse, a room perhaps twenty by forty feet, was occupied until driven out in June, 1833, by the advent of the first printing press ever set up in north-eastern Indiana,‡ for whose convenience, we may be assured, it was most willingly yielded by Presbyterians—a people who have ever stood in the front ranks of Protestantism, for the diffusion of knowledge through a free and independent press, and who, we may safely trust, will vindicate this historic claim, by being among the last to yield the freedom of discussion and the untrammelled dissemination of thought, under whatever

* Smallwood Noel.

† The Presbyterian church at Logansport was organized five months before.

‡ The Fort Wayne Sentinel established by Thos. Tigar and S. V. B. Noel.

specious pretext of public good, the encroachment shall come. Next, a carpenter's shop on the north side of Columbia street, where R. W. Taylor's store-room now stands, was for some length of time the sanctuary. At the close of each week's work, the shop was hastily transformed in its adaptation from material to sacred use, by removing the shavings and adjusting the benches, minus their backs, with the work-bench for a pulpit desk. A small room on the opposite side of Columbia street, was for a short time used, as was likewise a room in the old brick tavern, in the same street, on the site of Lafferty's store-room. During the summer of 1833, and afterwards in 1835 and 1836, the old brick Court-house, long since gone to decay, was occupied as a place of worship. On one Sabbath, now distinctly remembered, if not on more than one occasion, the congregation were compelled after the services had commenced to go forth from one of their humble sanctuaries, and were seen following their pastor, with bible and hymn-book in hand, in search of a place of less discomfort; having been sorely persecuted, not by Pope or King, but by the elements, eagerly taking advantage of some outrage, against the laws of practical science, by the chimney builder. Such were the wanderings and sojournings of the little congregation until in 1837, they found a home and resting place in their own church building—the small frame forty feet square, near east end of Berry street, now occupied by the English Lutherans.

This history has to-day its counterpart in many a place within the wide range of our advancing settlements, whose appeal for aid to the occupants of cushioned seats, and otherwise pleasant and comfortable edifices, needs no eloquence for its enforcement, other than the simple statement of such privation and endurance.

In this little frame church were organized both the Synod of Northern Indiana and the Presbytery of Fort Wayne, the former in October, 1843, and the latter on the 1st of January, 1845. Interest was imparted to the occasion of organizing the Synod, by the fact that the opening sermon

was preached by a venerable pioneer, Rev. John Wright, of Logansport, who, twenty-nine years before, at Chillicothe, had taken part in the organization of the Synod of Ohio.

H. S. That was a period of progress and growth, and the frame church in a short time became too small. The enterprise of erecting the commodious edifice now occupied, was considered as early as 1844. The corner-stone was laid by the pastor, Rev. *S. H.* Dickson, with appropriate religious ceremonies, in October, 1845. The basement of the new building was first occupied for public worship in 1847, and the upper room completed and solemnly dedicated to the worship of the Almighty God in November, 1852, with religious services, suited to an occasion of so much interest and joy, to all who loved the sanctuary. — The sermon was preached by Rev. Thomas E. Thomas, D. D., then President of Hanover College.

Th. S. A brief notice of those who have preached the gospel, sharing in the privations and blessings, sorrows and joys of the people, is appropriate to this historic sketch. The labors of Rev. James Chute were continued in humble, self-denying faithfulness, from the organization of the church till called to his rest on the 28th of December, 1835. His memory is blessed. Rev. Daniel Jones, afterwards in the New School connection, supplied the pulpit from April, 1836, to August, 1837. Rev. Alexander T. Rankin was next invited to this field. He entered on his ministry in October, 1837, and continued to labor here until September, 1843. Rev. William C. Anderson was called to the church in the spring of 1844. Though declining to accept the call, he took charge of the church and preached for some six months, guiding it, under the providence of God, most happily through the period of its greatest trial and danger. In September, Mr. Anderson's health having failed, a call was forwarded to *H. S.* Dickson. *Rev.* Mr. D. was installed pastor in November, 1844. Until this time the fixed relationship of pastor and people had not been enjoyed by this congregation — the several ministers hav-

ing labored as stated supplies. In the fall of 1847, Mr. Dickson having resigned the pastorate, Rev. Lowman Hawes supplied the pulpit for about six months. In Aug. 1848, Rev. J. G. Riheldaffer, then of the graduating class of Princeton Seminary, accepted a call and was installed as pastor, continuing in that relation until he resigned in 1851. In Nov. 1851, Rev. Jonathan Edwards was installed as pastor. He resigned in July, 1855, to accept the Presidency of Hanover College, and was succeeded by the present pastor Rev. John M. Lowrie, who was installed in Nov. 1856. During the vacancy before the settlement of the present pastor, Rev. J. H. Burns supplied the pulpit for a few months.

Of the twelve ministers who have labored in this church since the first visit of Father Ross, thirty-seven years ago, all, save one, are yet in sound health, fitted for the Master's work. If this fact shall tend in any degree to strengthen the missionary courage of some young Timothy who may be lingering among the overstocked eastern Presbyteries, in timid dread of "Western chills," its record here will not have been in vain.

The total number of admissions to membership in this church since its organization, on profession of faith and certificates from other churches, is five hundred and thirty-four. The present membership is two hundred and fifty-five. In May, 1844, six members were dismissed at their own request, who, with others, were then organized as the 2nd Presbyterian Church of Fort Wayne, in ecclesiastical connection with the New School Assembly.

For several years after the organization of the church, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists worshipped together, their respective ministers preaching on alternate Sabbaths. The number of church-goers seemed too small to divide. It was with difficulty, moreover, that even one place of meeting, affording reasonable comfort, could be procured. There are those yet living who can bear grateful testimony to seasons of marked religious enjoyment in

the union meetings of that period, held amid these rude surroundings, with so little of the elegance, or even the convenience, with which christian congregations in Fort Wayne are now blessed.

In any sketch of religious progress, efforts for instructing the children in the word of God, should by no means be omitted. The first Sabbath school in this place was organized in 1825, by James Hanna, an Elder in the church of Dayton, then on a visit to his children residing here. For some years all protestant denominations united in the work. In 1840, the Methodists and Lutherans, and in 1842, the Baptists, established separate schools in connection with their respective churches. Thus, with some interruptions in the earlier times, this school has continued for over a third of a century, and with the Sabbath schools sustained by other churches, not less useful, has contributed materially to the cause of morals and religion in this region. The Superintendents at the several periods of its history, are as follows: In 1830, Rev. Charles E. Furman, missionary at Fort Wayne; 1831, Smallwood Noel; 1837, Marshall S. Wines; 1840, James H. Jacoby; 1842, Nathan Farrand; 1843, Samuel Hanna; 1844, James H. Robinson; 1845, Samuel Bigger (Ex-Governor); 1847, H. P. Ayres; 1849, Rev. J. G. Riheldaffer (Pastor); 1850, John Cochrane; 1852, Rev. Jonathan Edwards (Pastor); 1853, George A. Irvin; 1856, John Hough, Jr.; 1858, H. P. Ayres.

Nor should the Ladies Missionary Circle be overlooked. This was instituted at an early period. Many are the instances in which the families of missionaries laboring in the destitute surroundings, have been essentially relieved through their unobtrusive labors. The ladies of the church have also contributed through this agency, first and last, near two thousand dollars towards erecting and furnishing the church building.

Such are some of the incidents in the military and religious history of Fort Wayne. Besides the chain of

events bearing strictly upon the progress of the Presbyterian church, other points of historic interest are brought prominently to view.

First, its early occupation by European nations. France and England, each in its turn, maintained a garrison here, as an exercise of sovereignty over this part of the continent. Great questions of infinite reach, involving dominion, race, language, law,* and religion, have hung upon the petty display of military power at the junction of these rivers.

Second, the signal success for a time attending the struggles of the Aborigines in repelling the approach of American civilization. No other point was defended with such obstinacy and valor. Successively, La Balm, Har-mar, and St. Clair were overwhelmed or driven back by savage courage and strategy. Shall we ascribe more than ordinary vigor and force to the Red-men, whose place of rendezvous for war or peace was here? Unquestionably, they were, in many respects, a noble race, before acquiring the lower vices of the whites. Or, was there a peculiar beauty and adaptedness to Indian life, in the rivers and forests surrounding this old carrying place, inciting to daring deeds for its defense? We are assured that no country ever filled more completely the range of an Indian's wants, or for him possessed more of the attractions of home.

Third, the persistence of the United States Government in establishing and maintaining its power here.—Four campaigns, three under Washington's and one under Madison's administration, each supported by the whole military power of the government in the north west, at the time, were directed to this point.

Fourth, when opened to civilized pursuits, enterprising men were attracted here by business facilities and command

* The French Colonists in Canada, long after the introduction of English jurisprudence, were irreconcilably opposed to the trial by jury. A Canadian, testifying before the British House of Commons in 1774, said "that the Canadians had no clear notions of government, having never been used to any such speculations."—*Dillon's History*.

ing position. Some of these brought with them an appreciation of religious privileges — the fruits of early training,—and when the missionary came to seek the scattered sheep in the wilderness, were ready to respond by co-operative efforts. The missionary's report in 1830, represents at that date an extraordinary attendance upon the preaching of the gospel. The state of society here at the present time, with very much to be amended, in one particular exemplifies the lasting influence of first settlers upon future character and habits. "As the twig is bent, the tree inclines." Truthfully may it be said in 1860, as in 1830, we are comparatively a church-going people. In few towns or cities in the West, is the population, Protestant *and* Catholic, in larger proportion found in the sanctuary on the Sabbath, than at Fort Wayne.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

The following, from Fowler's English Grammar, presenting the same general idea in a different form, was first noticed while the foregoing was passing through the press.

"The ancient tendency was to diversity, the modern is to unity of language. And if, in the early ages of the world, causes were in operation elsewhere, as well as on the plains of Shinar, which produced a confusion of tongues in the human race, we are prepared to believe that causes are now in operation which will produce an opposite result-

European and American commerce is finding its way to China and Japan, and to every region where man is found, and is thus making a common medium of intercourse necessary. The missionaries of the cross, in preaching one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God as the father of all, not only are promoting the sense of universal brotherhood through the race, but also the unity of language. Thus we can believe that if "one song shall employ all nations," one language shall be the principal medium of intercourse."

NOTE B.

From the earliest records the Miamies have been a leading and influential tribe. Bancroft says: "The Miamies was the most powerful confederacy of the West, excelling the Six Nations. * * * Their influence reached to the Mississippi, and they received frequent visits from tribes beyond that river." Mr. Gamelin, the messenger sent by George St. Clair, in April, 1790, to know the mind of the Indians as to peace or war, after reading the Governor's speech to the chiefs and head men, in every village on the route from Vincennes, was everywhere desired to proceed to the Miami town (Ke-ki-ong-gay.) They said, "you know that we can terminate nothing without the consent of our brothers—the Miamies." The impress of its name upon so many western rivers, shows the predominance of the tribe. The two Miamies of the Ohio will ever perpetuate it. The Miami of Lake Erie (now Maumee) was likewise named for the tribe. The St. Joseph, of Lake Michigan, was called the "*river Miamies*," when LaSalle erected a fort, and Hennepin first raised the cross at its mouth in November, 1679. Our own St. Mary's was marked "*Miamies' river*" on the *wide* skeleton map, made to represent the western country at the time of Colonel Boquet's expedition in 1763. *nude*

NOTE C.

An Incident in Indian Life at Fort Wayne.

About seventy years ago a white man was bound to the stake for burning. The mother of the late principal chief of the Miamies, Richardville, (or Pee-jee-wa) herself the daughter of a chief, a woman of great influence in the tribe, had made fruitless efforts to save him. The savages stood around eager for the cruel sacrifice, and the torch was ready to be applied. Richardville, then a young man, had been designated as their future chief, but not yet installed. To him his mother appealed, and placing a knife in his hand, bade him assert, at that moment, his chieftainship. Rushing within the infuriated circle, he cut the cords that bound the white man.— Though chagrined at the escape of their victim, all applauded, as men, savages or civilized will honor a bold and decided character, and his influence and power were from that time established. The kind hearted Miami woman contrived to secrete the white man, sending him down the Maumee in a canoe, under a cover of furs and peltries, in charge of some friendly Indians. Many years afterwards, the chief, in a journey to Washington City, stopped at a town in Ohio. A man approached him, throwing his arms around his neck in grateful embrace. It was the rescued prisoner.

These facts are given on the authority of Allen Hamilton, Esq., of Fort Wayne, as they were often related to him by the chief himself.

NOTE D.

PINE RIDGE, Choctaw Nation, Feb. 23, 1860.

MR. J. L. WILLIAMS, DEAR SIR:— Your letter of January 28 has just come to hand, ~~your inquiry~~ ^{inquire} respecting Col. Josiah H. Vose, of the United States Army. * * * He was stationed at Fort Towson, in the Choctaw country, from 1832 to 1840. I came to reside in this place in 1836, which is two miles from Fort Towson. During the four years of our residence so near to each other, our intercourse was frequent and most gratifying to myself, and I have reason to think mutually pleasant and profitable.

Col. Vose and wife were members of the Park Street Church, Boston. By request of Col. Vose, I preached a part of the time at Fort Towson, and the word seemed to be effectual to the salvation of souls. When I took charge of the church here, it was on the very frontier, not only of religion, but of civilization. The church at that time consisted of four members, two of them slaves; and westerly there was not, at that time, another Presbyterian professor of religion between this and the Rocky Mountains. The two first additions to our little church were two ~~sons~~ ^{sons} from the Fort. One of them, Lieut. Barnwell, from South Carolina, was a son-in-law of Colonel Vose. * * * The other was Lieut. Field, from Buffalo, N. Y. He subsequently married another daughter of Col. Vose. He was killed at the battle of Monterey, Mexico. * * * Gardiner Vose, a son of Col. Vose, is a minister of the gospel, and at this time a professor of rhetoric in Amherst college.

Col. Vose was a consistent Christian gentleman to the day of his death. His example and influence were always for good, over the officers and men under his command. He took a lively interest in our missionary operations, and gave it not only his favor in every practicable way, but also his substantial support. Col. Vose was ever ready to conduct meetings on the Sabbath when I was absent, and to take an active part in prayer meetings, and at the monthly concerts. The influence of such a commander, at a frontier post, among the Indians, is of inestimable value to the country at large.—

* * * More than sixty persons, including officers and their wives, soldiers and camp women, united with the church of which I have been the stated supply. No post on the western frontier, it is confidently believed, has exerted so favorable an influence on the cause of morality and religion as Fort Towson. This is to be ascribed in a good degree to the influence of pious commanders. * * * I shall never cease to give thanks to God for the favor he has shown us through the pious commanders that in his good providence have been stationed at Fort Towson, and in which favor Col. Vose was preeminent. * * *

“Blessed is the man who maketh the Lord his trust;” and blessings descend after him to unknown generations.

Yours truly,

C. KINGSBURY.

